

**Full text of the Inaugural Address delivered by  
Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India Shri Justice N V Ramana  
at the Inauguration of International Arbitration and Mediation Centre,  
Hyderabad.**

18 December, 2021

Namaskaram. I am extremely delighted to inaugurate this International Arbitration and Mediation Centre at Hyderabad with the Chief Minister today. That I have been given the opportunity to deliver the inaugural address makes it even more special.

This Centre becoming a reality is nothing short of a miracle. I have not witnessed any such project concluding in such a short span of time. During my first visit to this city as the Chief Justice of India, I broached this subject with Hon'ble Chief Minister Sri K Chandrasekhar Rao garu on 12<sup>th</sup> of June this year. There is no looking back after that. The Trust Deed was signed on 20<sup>th</sup> of August and MoU between the Government and the Trust was signed on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October. You all have witnessed the grand curtain raiser, exactly two weeks ago, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December. Today, we are inaugurating the state-of-the-art Centre. This whole process took six months only.

Creation of this Centre is nothing but a tribute to our visionary leaders who saw ADR as the way forward. Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao garu, the then Prime Minister had said during the inauguration of ICADR in New Delhi 26 years ago on 06th October 1995, I quote:

*“Any democracy worth the name must provide for adequate and effective means of dispute resolution at a reasonable cost; otherwise, the rule of law becomes a platitude and people may take law into their own hands, disrupting peace, order and good government. Effective dispute-resolution is also necessary to secure the smooth functioning of trade and commerce.”* Unquote

These words were spoken around the time the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 was being drafted and debated.

With economic liberalization, a need was felt to provide a viable alternative for parties, both national and international, to resolve their commercial disputes in India. The Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 was enacted with the hope to provide that alternative.

However, this is not to suggest that ADR mechanisms like Arbitration and Mediation are a new phenomenon. As Dr. P.C. Rao said, I quote-

*“The concept of parties to a dispute, settling their dispute in a binding manner, by reference to a person or persons of their choice, or private tribunals, was well known to ancient and medieval India.”*Unquote

Arbitration and Mediation have a long history in India. Recently, they have acquired prominence across the world as methods of dispute resolution.

I have been vocal about my support for such ADR methods. Such methods are beneficial to the parties to a dispute due to various reasons - low cost, speed, more control over timelines and process, autonomy of parties, more comfortable environment, and non-adversarial nature.

These are some of the reasons why I suggest that people explore ADR options such as arbitration and mediation first, and approach Courts only as a last resort.

Another reason for my support is because these methods can provide great support to our judicial system, by either preventing matters from going to Courts in the first place, or by moving litigations out of Courts.

The setting up of this International Arbitration and Mediation Center at Hyderabad is an important step towards enhancing the ADR landscape of the country. While arbitration centers have already been set up in India, most prominently in Delhi and Mumbai, domestic and international parties still appear to prefer the foreign Arbitration Centers.

I am sure that this trend will change with this Hyderabad Center. Domestic and international parties will increasingly come to this center, which has world class facilities. Its location in Hyderabad will also be an attraction. This is my city, so I might be accused of being a little partial towards it. But honestly, I think it is one of the best cities in the country. It is a growing hub of commerce and is one of the top destinations for business in India. I am feeling proud that I could contribute something which will enhance the glory of this city.

Hyderabad is strategically situated in the southern part of the Country. It is a bridge between north and south with seamless integration of people of different cultures, languages, religions and regions. Most importantly, the people of this city are incomparable. They are welcoming, warm and filled with good cheer. I cannot think of a better place for this Center.

With lot of hope and expectation, this Centre is being established. Collectively we did our best. A world class infrastructure and outstanding professionals are available to you at this Centre. It is for you to take it forward and turn it into most sought after destination for resolution of all types of disputes, including family as well as commercial disputes.

I am of the firm belief that when you take up a mission with good intentions and good heart, it is bound to be successful. Now, we have very good people manning this Centre. I am confident that the Hyderabad International Arbitration and Mediation Centre will emerge as one of the top destinations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who extended support for this Centre.

Generous thanks, and congratulations to the Chief Minister of Telangana who has extended his full support from the very start. His act of facilitating this Center by way of allotting land, office space, logistical and financial support has ensured that this Center became operational in the shortest possible time. This Chief Minister has the reputation of giving his best when he takes up such challenges. I am glad that, together, we have inaugurated the Center today.

Justice Raveendran ji is the perfect person to help take this institute forward. His knowledge along with his humility make him a role model for lawyers and Judges everywhere. With Brother Nageswar Rao dedicating his time and energy for this Centre, it is bound to flourish.

*{{ My Brother Justice Subhash Reddy is from this land. His constant support and encouragement has been extremely invaluable. }}*

My Sister Justice Hima Kohli supported this initiative wholeheartedly. As the Chief Justice of the High Court of Telangana, she provided immense support for the setting up of

this institution. She continues to give her invaluable inputs and actively contributes her thoughts and ideas for the betterment of this Center.

Brother Justice Narasimha has immense knowledge in this field, and he will add great value to this Center.

Since the time he took over as the Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court, Shri Satish Chandra Sharma, has been providing active support. His enthusiasm is highly energizing. Within a very short span, he has endeared himself to all the stakeholders in the judiciary. I wish him a glorious tenure as Chief Justice.

I also thank the Minister for Law, Forests and Environment, Government of Telangana. He has taken all necessary steps to ensure that the Centre receives necessary assistance.

I would also like to sincerely thank the Minister for IT, Chief Secretary, IT Secretary, Law Secretary of the Government of Telangana and the Registrar General of the Telangana High Court for their invaluable support.

The Chief Justices of the Telangana and Andhra Pradesh High Courts are here, along with the other Brother and Sister Judges. I request all of you to consider this Center in Hyderabad for any arbitration or mediation needs of the litigants, instead of sending them to some other location that is far away. This would ensure cost effective and efficient resolution of the disputes of local litigants.

I am sure that this Center will lead the way for Arbitration and Mediation in the country and will become the premier Center not only in India, but across Asia and the world. With these words, I dedicate this International Arbitration and Mediation Centre at Hyderabad to each and everyone who worked hard to make this dream come true.

Thank you.

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